

# TRANSFORMATION

## Natural Resources Canada Saves Money



The electronic data interchange credit card development team.

The Financial Management Institute of Canada

In the eyes of the public, the word "government" has rarely been linked with the words "easy to use," "cost effective," and "convenient." A glance at the way the procurement and payment system works reveals some of the reasons why. At Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), however, changes in the procurement payment system are designed to make the purchasing process cheaper and more efficient.

For years, the procurement payment system at NRCan has been cumbersome. Ninety per cent of NRCan's purchases are

worth less than \$5,000. Yet each small transaction could take up to 5.3 hours to process, require up to 26 hand-offs for reviews and approvals, and take up to 53 days to complete. In the end, paying each small bill cost NRCan \$120 over and above the cost of the goods themselves!

It was clear that a more efficient process was needed. Although Treasury Board endorsed the use of credit cards in 1992, few people were using them. But an internal goods and services re-engineering team found that, by using technology, the department could encourage

more people to use credit cards and would save money on transaction costs.

So Anne Grebenc and John Klimczak, two NRCan corporate finance managers, introduced electronic data interchange (EDI). By settling accounts through EDI, NRCan can deal with monthly invoices much more quickly and easily. Credit cards coupled with EDI make the procurement and payment process much simpler.

After a successful pilot project involving 17 card holders throughout NRCan, managers and administrative staff have

accepted cards as a better way of doing business. The number of card holders using EDI has gone from 87 in June 1995 to 650 in February 1996.

EDI can also be coupled with electronic funds transfer (EFT), a service offered by Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC). With this sys-

tem, PWGSC is able to deposit payments directly into a supplier's bank account, getting rid of the paper cheque. Because of the speed of this method of payment, NRCan may be eligible for a 50-per-cent rebate per transaction, resulting in additional savings for the department.

Financially, the initiative is a runaway success. The credit card/EDI system yielded more than \$1 million in savings in the 1995-96 fiscal year alone. In the long term, NRCan's savings could reach an estimated \$4 million to \$5 million each year.

With the success of the MasterCard initiative, NRCan has added three more suppliers—Visa, Bell Canada, and enRoute—to the EDI process, and is looking to include two more—Amex and Time Group Communications—in the next few months.

While the NRCan initiative "isn't exactly rocket science," according to Klimczak, its success can be repeated in other government departments. Gilles Vezina of Treasury Board Secretariat, the architect of the federal government acquisition card program, has "encouraged other federal organizations to follow NRCan's lead."

For more information, contact Anne Grebenc at Natural Resources Canada at (613) 995-0481.

## IQN Has a World Wide Web Site

The Interdepartmental Quality Network (IQN) has established a home page on the Internet. It's an interactive forum where users can share ideas about quality practices. If you have access to an Internet World Wide Web browser, the IQN invites you to visit the site, pose questions, and provide opinions on subjects that interest you. Your contribution will undergo little or no editing.

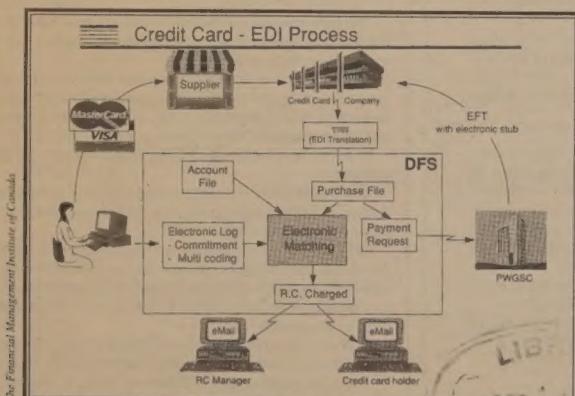
The user-friendly site uses a simple question-and-answer format. Sample questions that have already been posted include "Who can I benchmark against?" and "Where can I find detailed material about formal training on subjects related to providing quality service?"

Suggestions from Internet "quality surfers" for ways to improve the responses to such

questions are welcome. The site complements and provides links to other quality service initiatives on the Internet, such as Treasury Board Secretariat's Innovation and Quality Exchange.

One IQN member who reviewed the site said, "This will become the most valuable tool ever for people to share experience and opinions about quality service!" The IQN communications committee has somewhat less ambitious expectations. If the participation rate meets planned targets, the committee hopes to see the Web site become a learning environment for quality practitioners from several Canadian public-sector jurisdictions.

The address, or URL, of the site is <http://fox.nstn.ca/~iqn/>



The Financial Management Institute of Canada



Treasury Board  
Secretariat

Secrétariat du Conseil  
du Trésor

Please read and pass on to colleagues

Canada

# Interdepartmental Teams Celebrate Success

Celebrating our success is an important component of the quality services initiative. With that in mind, the Council for Administrative Renewal (CAR) has recognized the high-quality work of 18 of its interdepartmental teams. CAR is a government-wide body that aims to streamline and simplify internal processes.

Treasury Board President Marcel Massé recently presented the Council Team Merit Awards at a ceremony presided over by W.E. Robert Little, the Chair of CAR. Little is the Deputy Secretary and Deputy Comptroller General of Treasury Board Secretariat's Financial and Information Management Branch.

The recipient teams, which included 380 members from 40 departments and agencies, contributed significantly to efforts to find better ways of doing things. Departments and agencies have already implemented many of these improvements. The teams achieved significant results in three main areas: information technology security, shared systems, and re-engineering of government-wide processes. Their determination, dedication, and motivation helped them meet their goals, even though they were often working in change-resistant environments.

The Information Technology Security Strategy Steering Committee and its seven action teams investigated key technology areas such as electronic

authorization and authentication, public-key infrastructure, advanced card technologies, security firewalls and gateways, and confidentiality and privacy. They then made recommendations on actions the government should take. In addition, teams specializing in accountability and legal issues analyzed the ways proposed information technology security solutions would affect information management and government policies. For more information, contact David McKerrow at (613) 991-7176.

The Committee on Government Systems set up the shared systems clusters initiatives and guided their evolution as key groups were set up. These groups included the Integrated Finance\* and Material Management Project Team and Steering Committee, the PeopleSoft Human Resource Management System Board of Directors and Cluster Group, the Business Planning System Management Committee, the Management of Executive Information Team, and the Record, Document and Information Management Committee. For more information, contact Ed Warren at (613) 954-0768.

CAR recognized efforts to re-engineer business processes by presenting awards to the steering committee and core working group, for re-engineering procurement and payment, and to the steering committee, core working group and interdepart-

mental team for re-engineering pay and benefits. The first group of teams has produced the *Guide for Re-engineering Procurement and Payment*, a ready-to-use solution which Natural Resources Canada has already implemented, demonstrating its value. Another tangible benefit for departments is the redesigned business process model for pay and benefits. The second group of teams is creating a guide to help departments and agencies implement the model. For more information, contact Lise Lamadeleine at (613) 952-7196.

Another award recipient, the Locally Shared Support Services-Council on Administration of Les Terrasses de la Chaudière, has saved more than \$2 million by sharing mail and distribution, voice communications, reproduction and photocopying, and security services. For more information, contact Jean Bilodeau at (819) 997-2991.

An electronic document commemorating the awards ceremony is available on the Treasury Board bulletin board system and on ResSourceNet (<http://www.ResSourceNet.tbs-sct.gc.ca>). For a printed copy, call (613) 957-2459.

Marthe-A. Doyle  
Treasury Board Secretariat

# Feedback

As always, we appreciate your feedback on *Transformation*. Your comments help us to gauge how we're doing and to focus more clearly on your needs. Here are some of the comments we received on the spring 1996 issue:

"[Spring 1996] is another good issue. Thanks for a good internal 'zine."

"I happened to get a copy of the newsletter and would like to congratulate you and your team on producing such a relevant, informative and interesting document. I have already contacted two of the writers for more information."

"This is an interesting, informative and well laid-out information sheet. Also, excellent idea to use the kind of paper chosen (recyclable)."

"...[I] received a call from a manager...who had never seen Transformation

before. She just received her first copy (spring issue) and says it's 'excellent'!"

"This is the first time that I've received your newspaper, Transformation, and it is very interesting...I did not receive the first issue and I would not want to miss another one."

"It is interesting to note that the front page headline on the latest issue of Transformation deals with a waste program saving money and the environment. You sent this office, with a staff of three people, 25 copies of this publication...In order to avoid such waste, perhaps it would be advisable to determine how many copies can be used at various locations..."

(Editor's note: We are continuing to revise our distribution methods. Please see the note on page 4.)

# Real Property Services Launches Internet Site

In the market for an office building in Toronto, a bungalow in the Maritimes, or a building lot in Whitehorse? How about a launching ramp and dock in rural Ontario?

Canadians can now get information on surplus federal properties such as these by visiting a Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) World Wide Web site on the Internet.

Launched in May by PWGSC's Real Property Services Branch (RPS), the new site is designed to increase market exposure and boost sales of properties no longer needed to carry out federal programs. This, in turn, will save taxpayers' money by reducing costs for advertising, property maintenance, and taxes.

The government has traditionally advertised its surplus properties with signs on site and advertisements in the tender sections of newspapers. These advertisements are costly, and may not catch the eye of some would-be purchasers.

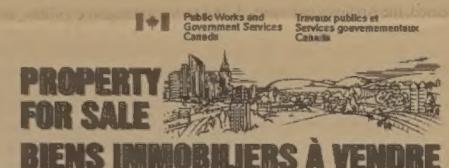
The Internet site provides detailed information on proper-

ties for sale. Along with its companion toll-free numbers, the Web site will ensure that all Canadians, as potential buyers, have equal access to information about the sale of federal properties. Making access to this information easier will help to sell surplus land, which will benefit the taxpayer, potential landowners looking for real estate, and the government.

As the site is developed, RPS plans to include graphic information such as floor plans and photographs.

The RPS Web site is located <http://www.pwgsc.gc.ca/govland>. To get access to brief descriptions, in English, of properties for sale, call 1-888-GOV-LAND. For service in French, call 1-888-FED-PROP.

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## Editorial Policy

# TRANSFORMATION

*Transformation* publishes stories on how federal Public Service employees are meeting challenges in providing quality services in today's environment.

If you'd like to share your story of adaptive, flexible, and innovative changes in your federal government work area, please contact Terri Doherty: Tel.: (613) 957-2549; Fax: (613) 954-9094; Internet: [Terri.Doherty@tbs-cts.x400.gc.ca](mailto:Terri.Doherty@tbs-cts.x400.gc.ca).

x400: c=ca; a=govmt.canada; p=gc+tbs.cgs; s=Doherty; g=Terri.

Articles should be no longer than 500 words and should be submitted in hard copy and electronic formats. Stories may be edited for style and length.

While *Transformation* is sponsored by Treasury Board Secretariat, the opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect official views or policy decisions of specific departments, or of the Government of Canada. The views and experiences expressed are those of the authors.

You can view issues of *Transformation* on Treasury Board Secretariat's World Wide Web site at <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/>.

We'd like to give special thanks to all those who have contributed articles for this issue!

# Digging Through the Archives

## Quality Service at the National Archives of Canada



Users explore ArchiVIA at the Archives nationales du Québec.

Every year, the National Archives of Canada answers more than 100,000 research inquiries, most of which come from ordinary Canadians interested in such subjects as their family histories. As funding has decreased, the Archives has maintained quality service by changing the way people use the Archives. In 1993, it put single-window service in place, made more of its holdings available electronically, and decentralized access.

As a result, information from the Archives is now available to more Canadians. In fact, with its extensive information holdings—including traditional paper documents, photographs, maps and plans, documentary art, electronic records, and audio-visual materials—the Archives is an ideal candidate for the quality service gains that come from using new information technologies.

For example, a series of CD-ROMs called ArchiVIA details documents held by the Archives. ArchiVIA will soon be joined by a CD-ROM of research guides, databases, and other information on Canada's native peoples.

The Archives has also gone on-line. Its new site on the World Wide Web gives Canadians access to an increasing range of services. Ultimately, the site will include genealogical databases and guides, research tools, and electronic exhibitions and publications. You can find the site at <http://www.archives.ca>.

At the same time, the Archives has also established decentralized site access so that people can obtain information about its holdings without travelling to Ottawa. Information kiosks have now been opened in partnership with

the Provincial Archives of Manitoba, the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, the University of British Columbia, and the Montreal office of the Archives nationales du Québec. Clients use the kiosks to do database searches and to use interactive guides, as well as to get copied holdings, which are mostly on microfilm. The partners, meanwhile, benefit from increased visibility and a larger client base.

In 1995, the Archives also started analyzing and restructuring key client services. This initiative concentrated on core services, set realistic standards, and aimed for improvement. Focus groups, employee workshops, and other feedback led to roughly 30 recommendations, many of which have been successfully implemented. For example, the Archives now answers written inquiries much more quickly. In addition, the process of copying material for clients is being made more efficient.

Service will continue to improve as the Archives consults with clients and monitors services against established service standards. Feedback will come from surveys, comment cards, formal meetings of the National Archives Researchers' Forum, and the daily interaction of staff and researchers.

The Archives may be the oldest federal cultural institution in Canada, but it is breaking new ground where quality service is concerned.

**David Enns**  
**National Archives of Canada**

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# Sharing Software Makes Sense

Let's face it—custom-made software is expensive. Federal, provincial, and municipal governments spend millions of taxpayers' dollars each year to create the ideal application for their needs.

Wouldn't it make sense for government departments—at all levels, all across the country—to have a place where they could find programs that have already been developed, and where they could share useful applications with others?

What they need is a service to tell departments what has already been done and to share applications with those in need. This agency is the Software Exchange Service (SES), a unit of Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC). For more than eight years, SES has been supplying this kind of information and fostering the sharing of solutions.

SES catalogues applications used by different departments, so these products can be freely shared with other departments. It maintains an inventory of Crown-owned, custom-developed applications, studies, and related documents, all of which are donated by departments and

agencies for use by their colleagues in all levels of government.

From April 1994 to March 1995, some 1,962 new clients called looking for information, compared with just 534 in 1993-94. And the SES electronic bulletin board received 1,407 calls. The exchange saves the government a conservatively estimated \$4 million a year.

Sounds great in theory, but does it really work? If you're still a skeptic, take a look at this example:

Several years ago, the former Department of Forestry's finance section worked with an outside contractor to develop a salary management system at a cost of about \$50,000. The department then gave a copy of it to SES to share with other departments. So far, the government has saved an estimated \$17 million from the sharing of this one application, which 24 government organizations have ultimately adopted.

With the help of SES, these organizations were grouped to share information and the cost of enhancements to the system. This system became the model for Treasury Board Secretariat's shared systems concept. To date,

more than a dozen new groups have been formed. SES promotes shared systems and identifies new opportunities.

Re-using existing Crown-owned software not only limits wasteful spending on duplicated effort, but also fosters a spirit of cooperation and teamwork within the government community.

If you work for a government organization and you're interested in checking out the inventory of SES products, you can get a free catalogue electronically or in print. Call SES at (819) 956-0790 to discuss your needs or share your solutions. The catalogue, and a wide selection of available applications, can also be downloaded from the SES bulletin board at (819) 956-7061.

You can reach SES on the Internet, if your department is a GENet subscriber, at <http://publiservice.gc.ca>. Look for our home page under Government Services.

Finally, SES publishes a newsletter called *Give and Take*, available to all government employees; just call (819) 956-0790 and ask for your copy.

**Chris Dodsworth**  
**Software Exchange Service**  
Tel.: (819) 956-0784

## ESSAY

### Quality Service in the Public Sector: A Personal Viewpoint

Introducing quality changes into government must include steps to overcome the widespread negative perceptions, held by citizens and even public-sector employees, about the Public Service.

Dissatisfied citizens don't differentiate politicians from bureaucrats, management from labour, or one of the three levels of government from another. Canadians are impatient for needed improvements, and that impatience has a powerful momentum that has been building for some time.

Quality concepts are appropriate guidelines for the responsive changes needed in the public sector. However, the following shift in perspective could ease the way for these changes.

Government services have played a positive and unique role in Canada. The public sector has had a significant, productive effect on Canadian quality of life by providing leadership in partnership with private companies. The government has ensured equality across the country by providing necessary services, even in cases where those services are not commercially viable. These

public and private interactions have benefitted Canadian society and have provided a model for all levels of government. It's possible that this type of cooperative, partnership response to meeting citizen needs may be the Canadian style.

**"Government services have played a positive and unique role in Canada."**

This positive viewpoint about Canadian governments would provide a platform from which to inform our customers. We could focus on the benefits Canadians receive from taxes, which the public often overlooks. The Canada Business Service Centres project, a joint federal-provincial effort that gives business people access in one location to services from all three levels of government, is one such example.

Individual Public Service employees could participate by continuing to provide general and specific information to clients. Information about the public sector's specific achievements could be made into short "spots" for prime

media outlets. Imagine a promotion highlighting Revenue Canada's Community Volunteer Program, which helps the elderly and the ill to complete their tax returns—not exactly the stereotypical image of tax collectors!

These messages would help the public understand the effects of decisions about maintaining or cutting service in the public domain. Supportive publicity would also be a pleasant change for Public Service employees and would encourage further improvements.

Endorsing the people in the Public Service as hard working and effective would encourage them to accept quality service ideas and applications. Using marketing methods to convey essential information would benefit clients of government services. Both groups would develop an informed appreciation of public-sector efforts and achievements, which would foster the continuing change that is such an important part of quality services.

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# Ontarians Can Report Health Hazards on Toll-free Line

Imagine you're a parent whose child's baby formula is making her ill. Feeling that other parents should be warned, you search through the phone book to find a number where you can reach government food inspectors.

After a long and frustrating hunt, you dial what looks like the right number, only to be given the voice-mail run-around and to hear the world's most annoying phrase: "Sorry, that's not my department."

In February 1995, the Ontario Region Health Protection Branch of Health Canada took a major step to eliminate that phrase from its employees' vocabulary. And more than a year later, the toll-free Food Health Hazard Service line—offering service in English and French—is helping Health Canada improve its customer service in Ontario.

"Prior to the creation of the 1-800 line, we were getting calls to six or seven different work sites, and each site had a different way of handling the complaints," says Doreen Moore, Chief of Food Inspection for Ontario. "Now we're not bouncing the customer around and we're handling all customer complaints in the same way."

The consumer complaints officers who staff the toll-free line listen to callers' concerns about a range of issues, from finding hair in a chocolate bar to food poisoning in restaurants. At the time of the call, officers



*A consumer complaints officer handles a caller's question.*

decide what action should be taken, keeping in mind the number of people who could be affected and the seriousness of the complaint. For example, Moore says, complaints about baby food are always investigated.

"We're very clear with the consumer when we tell them whether we're taking action," says Moore. "If we decide that immediate action isn't necessary, we'll tell them the complaint will be looked into during the next routine inspection."

Once the consumer has hung up, officers decide what to do with the information the caller gave. Complaints may be brought up during the company's next health inspection; they may be referred to a number of public health inspectors; or they may be sent to another department—Fisheries and Oceans, for example.

The main benefit of the service is that the caller only needs to make the original 1-800 call, and the officers do any referrals necessary. Moore says that,

although it took some time for Ontarians to get used to the new number, referrals from other agencies and updated telephone listings mean people are taking advantage of the service more often.

On July 1, 1996, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada took over responsibility for the service. However, the toll-free number and all other aspects of the service remain the same.

If you live in Ontario and you have a food health hazard concern, call 1-800-701-2737.

## A Note About Distribution

Note: Treasury Board Secretariat sends copies of Transformation to 6,000 points of contact across Canada. These points of contact are asked to distribute or share their copies further within their organization or region. Our aim is to make Transformation accessible to as many Public Service employees as possible. If you wish to receive additional copies of Transformation, contact our distribution centre at (613) 995-2855. Please note that you may also view Transformation on the World Wide Web at <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca>.

This issue has been assembled by an interdepartmental editorial team: Henry Ober, Editor-in-Chief (Public Works and Government Services Canada), Terri Doherty (Treasury Board Secretariat), John Dingwall (Canadian Centre for Management Development), and Dennis Baird (Revenue Canada). This team is supported editorially by Cornerstone Creative Communications, Inc. Thewmeweaver provides design and Apostrophe provides translation.

## Auditors and Clients Collaborate to Foster Quality Service

Service standards are a key part of the move toward quality service. Like most departments, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) has been busy developing a set of standards to help the department measure its effectiveness.

In preparing for audits of specific tasks, the internal audit group at DFAIT works with auditees to develop review criteria. These are then included in audit guides, which also contain a description of the work being done and audit procedures. This approach has resulted in frameworks that evaluate activities more fairly and criteria that are less subject to dispute.

When service standards are available, they become part of the review framework. If service standards have not yet been fully developed or tested, the audit guide development process gives the auditor and auditee a chance to collaborate in setting up these standards, to the benefit of both.

In DFAIT's recently developed audit guides, auditors have been able to create service standards while developing a framework for review. They have thus been able to develop much more comprehensive review criteria.

Next, the service standards and audit guides were evaluated, first by field managers at missions abroad and then through a simu-

lated audit using the draft guide. The guides have been well-received. Some field managers commented that this was the first time they were made clearly aware of the way their performance would be judged. They provided many valuable suggestions, which further enhanced the final product.

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## Attention, Internet users!

For your convenience, here is a list of all the World Wide Web sites mentioned in this issue of Transformation.

**Interdepartmental Quality Network**  
<http://fox.nstn.ca/~iqn>

**National Archives of Canada**  
<http://www.archives.ca>

**Real Property Services**  
<http://www.pwgsc.gc.ca/govland>

**ResSourceNet**  
<http://www.ResSourceNet.tbs-sct.gc.ca>

**Software Exchange Service**  
<http://publiservice.gc.ca>

**Treasury Board Secretariat**  
<http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca>

## *Avis aux navigateurs*

Vous trouverez ci-après, aux fins d'information, une liste de tous les sites Internet mentionnés dans le présent

de l'ensemble du coursier. Au-delà de ces points d'acheminement, il devient nécessaire d'effectuer des examens au moyen de transformations de type II. Ces dernières sont effectuées par un caméra qui détermine la position de 6 000 points tracés sur une feuille de 99x99 cm. Ces positions sont ensuite comparées avec les positions déterminées au moyen d'un système de points de référence placé devant la caméra. Les différences entre les deux positions sont alors converties en distances et en angles. Ces informations sont ensuite envoyées à un ordinateur qui calcule la position exacte de l'ensemble du coursier.

### *distribution*

Une agence des plaintes répond à la question d'un consommateur

Une fois la convolution terminée, les gradients des erreurs sont calculés et utilisés pour ajuster les paramètres de la couche précédente. Ce processus est répété jusqu'à ce que l'erreur soit suffisamment petite ou que le nombre d'itérations maximum soit atteint.

Le service offre un grand avantage : les personnes qui formule la demande peuvent saisir leurs informations personnelles directement dans l'application, ce qui facilite la gestion et l'analyse des données. De plus, l'application peut être personnalisée en fonction des besoins spécifiques de chaque client.

En conclusion, l'application de gestion de la demande de permis de construire est une solution efficace et pratique pour les autorités locales et les citoyens. Elle permet de simplifier les procédures administratives et de faciliter la communication entre les deux parties. Cela contribue à améliorer l'efficacité et la transparence du système de permis de construire.

Les générations futures des planniters de la métropole régionale

## Vérité catécaux et clients unissent leurs efforts

## **Qualité des services**

**Une ligne sans frais pour signaler les risques pour la santé en Ontario**







